Soldiers' and Sailors' Historical Society
OF RHODE ISLAND.

# PERSONAL NARRATIVES:

Fourth Series, No. 13.

FROM MEMPHIS TO ALLATOONA;

AND THE

### BATTLE OF ALLATOONA,

OCTOBER 5, 1864.

BY GEORGE W. HILL,

[Late Captain Twenty-Second United States Infantry.]



#### PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

## WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

# RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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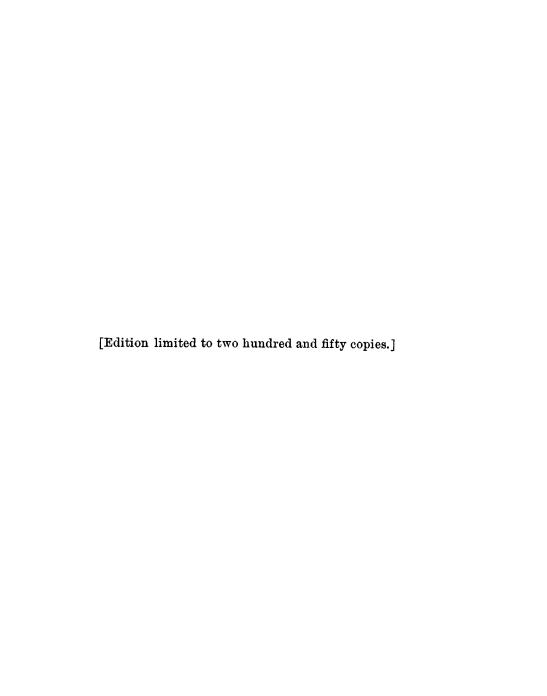
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#### FROM

## Memphis to Allatoona,

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#### BATTLE OF ALLATOONA.

A GLANCE at any ordinary map will show that the route by river and rail "from Memphis to Allatoona" is a long and tedious one when made without accident or delay, but I promise you it shall not be so long as it was once, if we have no accidents, do not run on any bars, and have water on the shoals.

The brave soldier on the picket line or in line of battle was often pushed to the rear because expected reinforcements did not arrive, and there were men at home who would always have fought the battles better, could have pushed up reinforcements in time had they been there, but took very good care not to be.

I may by this paper give an insight into some of the smaller delays as an answer to them. I was relieved as mustering and disbursing officer at Springfield, Ill., Aug. 27, 1863, and ordered to join my regiment in the field, which was on the Black River, in the rear of Vicksburg, Miss. As soon as I could turn over my money and property to my successor and arrange my retained papers, I proceeded to comply with the order.

Accordingly, I repaired to Memphis, Tenn., on my way to Vicksburg, and, on arrival, I called on the depot quartermaster to ascertain if any steamboat was to leave soon for Vicksburg. I learned from him that my regiment (or the first battalion, which was all there was organized of it), was on its way up the Mississippi River, together with the Fifteenth Army Corps, and the best thing for me to do was to wait its arrival, as otherwise I should pass it on the river and have to come back and follow it, for it would have arrived and left for Chattanooga before I could return. To my delight I found Maj. Asher R. Eddy, a native of Rhode Island, depot quartermaster. He was a graduate of West Point in the class of

1844, and knew more about the quartermaster's department than any officer I ever met in the army. He was a genial, whole-souled fellow, very social, well read in general literature, had been abroad, was thoroughly acquainted with his duties, and one of the most pleasing officers to do business with that it was my fortune to ever meet. He took me into his mess, and, I assure you, I was royally entertained.

I had been in Memphis only a few days when Maj.-Gen. Stephen A. Hurlburt, in command of the Sixteenth Army Corps and District of Memphis, ordered me on duty as Assistant Provost Marshal to Capt. George A. Williams, First United States Infantry, the Provost Marshal of the district, relieving Captain Woodward, of the Sixth Iowa Volunteers. I remained on this duty till the Fifteenth Corps arrived from Vicksburg with the battalion of my regiment, to which I reported, and when it left I remained, not being relieved from provost marshal's duty.

About this time (September, 1863,) it will be remembered they had become thoroughly aroused in

Washington by the peril of Rosecrans at Chattanooga.

Burnside at Knoxville, Hurlburt at Memphis, and Grant at Vicksburg had been telegraphed to move troops at once to the support of Rosecrans.

Grant ordered General Sherman, with the Fifteenth Corps from Vicksburg, and General Halleck detached the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps from the Army of the Potomac, and ordered them, under the command of Gen. Joseph Hooker, to Middle Tennessee to hold till further orders Rosecrans' line of communication from Nashville to Bridgeport.

This transfer of 20,000 men, with all their artillery, munitions and baggage, was done with remarkable celerity, and required extraordinary exertions on the part of all concerned.

These two corps marched from the Rapidan to Washington, taking cars and being transported by way of Cumberland, Wheeling, Cincinnati, Louisville and Nashville to the Tennessee River, and there debarked in fighting array in the incredible short period of eight days, a feat in the transportation of troops and munitions that, I believe, has never been surpassed.

General Rosecrans at this time was relieved of the command of the Army of the Cumberland and ordered to turn it over to Maj.-Gen. George H. Thomas. General Grant was selected for the chief command, and then followed the battles so well described by Capt. Albert R. Greene in his paper, "From Bridgeport to Chattanooga."

Every available man being wanted now, all the convalescents belonging to the Fifteenth Corps at Fort Pickering, near Memphis, were ordered forward, and I was directed to take charge of them and distribute them to their proper commands. I was also expected to get them through to Chattanooga in time for them to be with their regiments and take part in the battles of Lookout Mountain and Mission Ridge.

On November 8, 1863, I was relieved from provost marshal duty, and on the 10th embarked on the steamboat *Mary E. Forsythe*, with 368 men and Surgeon D. L. Huntington, United States Army, for Cairo, Ill.

Three of the men were brought from the fort in an ambulance, and I remarked to Gen. James C. Veatch, who was on the levee, that I thought such men rather poor for the battle-field. His reply was, "They were all ordered forward and he was glad to get rid of them." I arrived at Cairo on the 12th, at 1 A. M., and had come to this point on a fine, roomy steamboat, that glided majestically over the Father of Waters, and I was sorry to leave it.

The first day out from Memphis I divided the command into squads and put sergeants and corporals in charge of them and had everything arranged, as I supposed, for a gala day trip up the Ohio and Cumberland rivers; but alas! how soon the air castles I had built vanished and I felt the force of the poet's lines:

"The bird that soars on highest wing Builds on the ground her lowly nest."

Landed on the levee at Cairo at dead of night, the men made the best of it, and I wandered about till morning looking for the quartermaster's office. I made haste to visit Captain Wolfolck, the post quartermaster, as soon as he was in his office, and made application for transportation, stating my case and the need of expedition.

I was informed no boat would leave before night, when the *Rob Roy* would start for Nashville, to which point I could go without change, as she was going there direct.

I visited the Rob Roy at once, and found her a small boat of 125 tons, drawing three and a half feet of water, light, that she could not run with safety without thirty tons of ballast to prevent the explosion of her boilers by careening, and when loaded to her capacity drew eight feet of water. Besides, she was to tow a barge loaded with 3,500 four-bushel sacks of oats. I returned to Captain Wolfolck's office and to him urgently protested against being sent away on such a boat. I asked him if he thought a boat drawing eight feet of water could go up the Cumberland River when there was only two feet of water on the shoals. The reply the quartermaster gave me was a partial turn of the head and one of those peculiar grins, you have seen them, that says nothing yet tells everything. I had not been in the field long enough to learn that protests amounted to nothing unless it pleased the officer to think as you did. Did any of you ever

have charge of a body of convalescents? If you never did, let me advise you not to try it. Since then I have kept clear of having charge of any party, even a picnic party.

Cairo was a peculiar place and peculiarly situated, as those who have been there can testify. Prohibition was no part of the state law or city ordinances, and we all know it was not needed for old soldiers, but I think it would have been better for convalescents had such an act been in force, for I presume the appetite they had must have been acquired by their doses of quinine at the convalescent camp.

Did you ever see a shepherd dog herding cattle or sheep? I have in far-off Dakota seen a half-grown shepherd dog herding a brood of chickens, and all the day at Cairo I was playing the part of herding those convalescents till 9 o'clock in the evening, when the boat started running ten miles an hour and tying up for the night.

I succeeded in getting all but seven of the men on board the boat. Two were left in hospital. The other five were not to be found.

At daylight the next day the boat started, and all

went smoothly till we arrived at Cottonwood Bar, where the pilots ran on to the bar three times in apparently the same place, and each time had to spar off, wasting nearly half a day, when by going one hundred feet nearer shore at first, as they finally did, there need have been no delay.

From what I had observed in coming thus far I concluded that I should never get to Nashville on that boat.

We arrived at Paducah, Ky., at 4 P. M., reported to the quartermaster, and then left for Smithland, Ky., at the mouth of the Cumberland River, which was only twelve miles distant, and plenty of water, yet we were forty-nine hours going that twelve miles with no accident of any kind.

The captain reported at Smithland, as, indeed, all boats had to do at every post. I represented my condition and that of the boat to Capt. H. Rasin, post quartermaster, and asked for another boat to take me to Nashville. He appreciated my position, but could not help me. Leaving a man in hospital, I started again on the *Rob Roy*. On the 16th we ran about forty miles and tied up, and the next day

run to Ingram Shoals, some ten miles, and tried to go over them; did not, dropped back, and tied up for the night.

On the morning of the 18th the captain tried the shoals again, could not get over them, dropped down the river, tied the boat up, put the fires out, and told me he could go no farther.

I was now in a dilemma. The men were sick, one had died, the rations were getting short, and there was no prospect of going farther. I determined to seize the first boat up or down the river. In a few hours the Stephen Decatur hove in sight, coming down the river. I boarded her, had her round to, and told the captain my situation and that he must take me to Nashville.

"I have just come over Harper's Shoals with only eighteen inches of water; have broken a plank in the bottom of my boat, besides I could not get back with any load over the shoals," said he; "but if you want to take the responsibility to take me back to Nashville and keep me all winter at an expense of \$260 per day I will go."

I concluded not to take the boat, and sent the following dispatch by him to Captain Rasin, assistant quartermaster:

On Board Steamboat Rob Roy, Cumberland River, Nov. 18, 1863.

Capt. H. Rasin, A. Q. M., Smithland, Ky.:

The steamer Rob Roy is at Ingram Shoals. Can go no farther.

Men getting out of rations, men growing sick; must have a boat to go up the river at once.

GEO. W. HILL,

Captain Thirteenth U. S. Infantry, in charge.

Per Stephen Decatur.

About noon, the 19th, I received the following:

Office Assistant Quartermaster, Smithland, Ky., Nov. 18, 1863.

Captain Hill:

I send you by steamer *Emma* provisions. Please sign the blanks enclosed and deliver them to the clerk of steamer *Emma*. Place as many troops as practicable on the *Emma*, and order any boat going up or coming down the river to assist you. I will send the first light boat that I can.

Respectfully,

H. RASIN,

Captain and Assistant Quartermaster.

The steamer Emma, drew all the water that she could get over the shoals with, and not deeming it practicable or wise to separate the men, I did not use the Emma.

Within an hour the steamer Leni Leoti came down the river. I boarded her; found she drew but sixteen inches of water. I at once ordered her up the river and tied up alongside the Rob Roy, and while the men were moving on to the boat the steamer's men were taking the coal from the Rob Roy to the other boat. The captain of the Rob Roy protested. I replied to him that the purpose for which he took the coal was being carried out by another boat; that was all the difference. Being safely on board, we started and landed at Nashville at 9 P. M. next day, having been twelve days on the two rivers, when I ought to have been but five.

At Fort Donelson I telegraphed for ambulances to meet me at the landing with a guard, which they did, and twenty-three men were taken to the hospital and three hundred and forty to Exchange Barracks. When they were safely housed I felt that I could breathe free for a time at least, and I had the first night's sleep for a week.

The next day the surgeon of the barracks sent 207 of the men to a convalescent camp, and the following day I left Nashville for Chattanooga with 133 of the 368 men with whom I started from Memphis, going by railroad, riding and sleeping on the top of freight cars, as no one was permitted to ride inside of them.

Landing at Stevenson, Ala., at 10 P. M., we slept in the streets among the debris incident to the debarking of the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, and after a breakfast we again started, but on arriving at Bridgeport were halted for a day for want of transportation, and passed the night as best we could in the woods in a cold, violent rain-storm.

The next day I pushed on and rode from Bridgeport to Whiteside, in sight of the promised land, on some flat cars, from which point we marched to Chattanooga, some four or six miles, arriving late in the afternoon.

I reported to the post commander, Col. John G. Parkhurst, for quarters and rations. He ordered me to the field hospital, to report to the surgeon in charge for police duty I reported as ordered, and

all night the wounded were being brought in from the fights at Greysville and Ringgold. The necessary turmoil and confusion on such occasions banished sleep and rest.

At daylight I took a survey of the situation and felt sure I did not want to remain there, and learning the headquarters of the Fifteenth Corps were near, I visited Colonel Parkhurst and prevailed on him to revoke the order of detail, and I proceeded to report to the provost marshal of the Fifteenth Corps, to whom I turned over the men for distribution. When this was done I felt a relief beyond description and reported to my battalion where I obtained several days' needed rest. I had now been twenty-one days on a trip that ought not to have exceeded seven, attended by the most annoying and unnecessary hindrances.

After the Army of the Cumberland had been relieved of the dilemma it was in and the siege of Knoxville had been raised and Bragg had been driven well down into Georgia, the Fifteenth Corps went into winter quarters at Huntsville, Ala.

My regiment being headquarters guard, we arrived safely in Huntsville after a weary march of seven days of cold, rainy weather. On the day of our arrival the thermometer marked a degree of cold that had not been known for thirty years in that locality. Nothing occurred during the winter of any special note save that the whole corps was put in trim for the Atlanta campaign.

An incident occurred the day of our arrival in Huntsville I will here relate. With other officers I applied to the quartermaster for a house for quarters. The quartermaster told us if we could find a house owned or occupied by a rebel he would assign it to us. I went out, and while walking around looking for quarters it occurred to me that if I could find a colored man who would talk I might find quarters. As I crossed the street I saw one coming towards me, and halting on the corner looked him over as he approached, as I had several others. I accosted him and found he was a native of the town and had lived there for more than thirty years. I plied him with all sorts of questions but could get no information, and began to despair. Looking around the corner I

saw a colored servant belonging to headquarters approaching, and when he joined us I greeted him, and the two recognized each other and began talking. I said to the servant: "Dan, what is the matter with this man? He won't talk to me. He is afraid of me." "Oh, Bill," said Dan, "you can trust the captain. He is true from his heels up." This was the open sesame. In two or three hours from that time I had the history of nearly every family in town, how many were in the army, how many killed, their rank, and where they were. Thanking him for his information, I returned to the quartermaster's office and imparted the information that had been given me, when he told me he had been trying for two weeks to get the information I had given him, and proposed to have me made provost marshal of the town, but I had just enough experience in Memphis to keep out of it. After this all the officers had quarters completely furnished.

This circumstance made me seemingly the confidant of all the colored people in the town. This incident often occurs to me when I see the colored people, and too much praise, I believe, cannot be

given them for their intense loyalty in the great struggle.

In the early spring of 1864 General Sherman transferred his headquarters to Nashville, and my battalion went into camp in the town of Edgefield, just across the Cumberland River, and spent the summer doing provost guard duty in Nashville, where I came in contact with Andrew Johnson, late President, then military governor of Tennessee.

While in camp here I arranged for my meals with a Mr. Hillman, an iron merchant of Nashville, who had been a member of the secession convention that took Tennessee out of the Union as much as it could. From Mr. Hillman I obtained a partial history of its proceedings, and among other things he gave me Andrew Johnson's action in the convention as one of the delegates.

You remember he was a senator from Tennessee, whose term expired on the 4th of March, 1861, and during the short session he made several speeches in answer to some of the senators who left the Senate when their states seceded, and among other things he said:

"I am opposed to secession. I believe it is no remedy for the evils complained of. Instead of acting with that division of my Southern friends who take ground for secession, I shall take other grounds, while I try to accomplish the same end.

"I believe I may speak with some degree of confidence for the people of my State, and we intend to fight this battle inside, not outside the Union, and if anybody must go out of the Union it must be those who violate it. I have been told that this Union is gone. If this be so, and the war that has been made upon me in consequence of advocating the constitution and the Union is to result in my overthrow and in my destruction, and that flag, the glorious flag, the emblem of the Union, which was borne by Washington through a seven years' struggle, shall be struck from the Capitol and trailed in the dust, when this Union is interred I want no more honorable winding sheet than that brave old flag, and no more glorious grave than to be interred in the tomb of the Union."

After making such a speech he went to Tennessee, was a delegate to the convention, and introduced a resolution of secession and made a speech in its favor, and urged the convention to adopt his plan. If it would he would go with them to the end; if not he would go to the other side and beat them if he could, clearly showing, I believe, that he only stayed on the Union side because he could not have his way.

Learning at this time that he was to be pushed for the vice-presidency, I wrote a long letter to Senator Henry Wilson, giving him the information I had at the time, and asked him if any such thing was in contemplation, to use all his influence to prevent it, saying that if it was done, from what I had seen personally and learned, I believed the party would regret it. He replied to me saying that "he feared it had gone too far to prevent it." I have never seen any reason for changing my opinion on that subject.

In July, 1864, I was detailed as Assistant Commissary of Musters for the Third Division, Fifteenth Corps, and reported to Brig.-Gen. John E. Smith commanding the division at Cartersville, Ga., to fill a vacancy, and while there was little to do but get acquainted with the surrounding country, and act as his judge advocate, there was just enough to do to prevent ennui and make the time pass pleasantly.

About the 5th of Sebtember, 1864, General Sherman established his headquarters in Atlanta, with his army (about 70,000) encamped around him for the needed rest, after a campaign of a hundred days

or more, of which eighty were under fire, when he began preparations for the march through Georgia.

Many of the secessionists from the country round about came to Atlanta for passes to go for the remains of their friends, and among them was Benjamin H. Hill, late a senator from Georgia, accompanied by his friend Nathaniel G. Foster, who had been a member of Congress, for the remains of his son killed at the battle of Cassville, some twelve miles from Cartersville. General Smith sent a party with Mr. Hill, who exhumed the body and brought it to Cartersville, expecting the next day to leave with it for home, but circumstances over which he had no control, detained him at Cartersville for some days, and the remains were again interred.

Sherman in closing the Atlanta campaign had driven General Hood well down into Georgia, but Hood did not remain quiet long; he broke his army up into raiding parties which went north nearly to Chattanooga with the intention of drawing Sherman out of Georgia.

The railroad was torn up for ten miles or more at Resaca, the bridge across the Oostanaula River des-

troyed in part, the telegraph broken, and stores destroyed by a cavalry force under General Pillow. While this was being done Jefferson Davis visited the army at Palmetto and made a gloomy speech at Macon, deploring the loss of Atlanta.

Hood being still retained in command, he flanked Sherman's right and crossed the Chattahoochee and pushed north to Dallas, and from here sent his cavalry by the right rapidly to Big Shanty, where they tore up the railroad and broke the telegraph for several miles, making twenty miles or more of railroad torn up between Atlanta and Chattanooga.

General Sherman was thoroughly aroused by the information that the rebels had crossed the Chattahoochee, and Gen. George H. Thomas was sent to Nashville to look after that point, and left Gen. Henry W. Slocum with the Twentieth Corps to hold Atlanta, while he came north with the bulk of his army and had arrived at Kenesaw Mountain, some eighteen miles south of Allatoona, when General French appeared before Allatoona Oct. 5, 1864.

When General Sherman arrived at Kenesaw Mountain and learned that French was there, he signaled to the commander at Allatoona: "Hold the fort, for I am coming."

About noon of the 4th the following order was handed to me by the writer:

Capt. George W. Hill.

Proceed with the engine to Rome and hand to General Corse the enclosed letter.

I learn that two cars must be put on the track before you can reach Rome.

Have as little delay as possible; throw the cars off, if that is the most expeditious way of disposing of them.

Moments are of importance, so improve them.

Respectfully,

GREEN B. RAUM,

Brevet Brigadier-General.

HD. QRS., 3D DIV., 15 CORPS, Oct. 4, '64.

General Raum was in command of the Third Division at the time, General Smith having gone to Chattanooga to help the sutler get through a lot of goods.

I put the order in my pocket and asked for four men to go with me, and learned that I was going to Rome to get Gen. John M. Corse with his division, and the letter was an order for him to move at once. I at once repaired to the engine with the four soldiers. Messrs. Hill and Foster who had been waiting for several days at headquarters for a chance to get away applied to accompany me to Rome, and there being no objections I assented. I took my station on the engine, and found the engineer in a state of excitement that made him nearly unfit to run the engine.

I looked him over, questioned him some, and then told him he must run as fast as possible with safety. He was running not much faster than a man could run, and replied that he would not run any faster because he wanted a chance to jump and run, as he was not going down south as a prisoner.

Here was a dilemma. Haste was required, and here was a point blank refusal to run any faster. I immediately clambered over the tender to the caboose, called my soldiers, took them on the engine, stepped up to the engineer and said, with my hand on his shoulder, "You run this engine as fast as possible, or I will throw you off and go on without you. You are not necessary, we can go without you."

He looked at me a moment and said, "Do you mean that?"

I replied, "Just that exactly, and I want an answer at once."

"I will run just as fast as you want me to run," he replied.

I kept the soldiers on the tender and we made up for lost time. When I arrived at Kingston, ten miles from Cartersville, where I left the main line and took the branch to Rome, I asked the colonel commanding the post how many empty cars he had there. "Twelve," he replied. "I must have them." "The railroad folks won't let you have them." "You won't oppose me with a force." "Oh no," he replied. "Then they go along with me." The colonel also informed me that I could not get to Rome as the road was torn up some twelve miles from Kingston. I gathered the empty cars and When within seven or eight miles of Rome, I found two cars loaded with hospital stores off the track, and the track in a bad condition for some distance, the tender of an engine there, the engine having gone to Rome to fill her boiler with

water, and a gang of section men trying to get the cars on the track so as to repair the road. With the appliances at hand I threw the cars down the embankment, rolled off the boulder that had done the mischief, thus clearing the track. The foreman pledged himself to have the track ready in an hour. I left instructions with the engineer who had brought me thus far, to follow me into Rome as soon as he could. I then took the hand-car with the four soldiers and Messrs. Hill and Foster and started for Rome.

The soldiers manned the brakes for a mile or more, and then Hill, Foster, and myself took them and ran the car till the perspiration flowed freely. Thus we alternated for some four miles with blistered hands and a very sensible "goneness" at the stomach, when we came to the camp of a company. I obtained of the captain a relay of four men and proceeded until within a mile of Rome I met the engine returning for her tender.

I left the hand car with orders to go to Rome and await my return. I then got on to the engine and with it returned to the break in the road, and by the

time the engine was coupled to its tender the road was repaired and we proceeded on our way.

The engineer I met at the break entered heartily into the spirit of my errand, and while we were going into Rome I arranged with him to make up a train of twenty cars, to have his and the other engine well wooded and watered, and for him to be at the rear, and the other engine at the forward end of the train. We arrived just at sunset.

I at once repaired to Gen. John M. Corse's headquarters, and found him lying on a cot, handed him the dispatch and awaited developments. He read and reread, and waiting a moment he turned to me and said, "I can't get to Allatoona, the road is all torn up."

"Oh, no, general, the road is all right, I have just come over it with an engine and 'tis repaired."

"I have had one brigade in line all day waiting to go, but I can't get control of the d——d railroad, and I have just ordered them to camp again, and given up going," he said to me.

"I have control of a train for you, with two engines and twenty cars, and can load you in twenty minutes if you will have your men at the depot," I answered.

"You can't get a train when I can't," was his quick reply.

"But, I say to you, I have what I tell you, twenty cars and two engines."

"How in h—l could you get a train when I could not?" he asked.

"I just took control, that is all there is to it." After some more bickering about the railroad and wishing it sunk, he ordered the brigade as soon as they had eaten their supper, to report to the depot.

The general then asked me who was investing the place, and how many there were. I replied that I believed General French was there, and he was reported to have from two to five thousand, and that he would get all the fight he wanted.

General Corse answered, "If I go down there I will pitch into them by ——, if there is thirty thousand."

I had observed as I went over the road that the rails were very light and many of them loose, and I feared there might be a disaster, without the utmost

care in running with so heavy a train, I therefore left General Corse and went to the depot to have the train in as safe a condition as possible. I consulted with the engineers and we concluded to make no stop upon any consideration whatever, and to run at a moderate speed.

General Corse had a portion of the first brigade of his division on board the cars between nine and ten of the clock. Giving him the signals agreed upon in case of danger or accident, and, receiving an intimation from him that he was ready to go, I took position on the forward engine, and we moved off to Allatoona, where the command debarked and marched inside the fortifications without the slightest accident or delay, at 1 A. M., Oct. 5, 1864.

A cut 120 feet deep at the lowest point had been made for the railroad which separated the heights into two parts, and which had been bridged to connect them for easy access. The two points thus made were fortified, and the guns in each redoubt bore directly on the store-houses close by the railroad, as well as protected each other by an enfilading fire.

At daylight General French had completely invested Allatoona, and a sharp artillery duel of some two hours or more raged. This was followed by a summons to surrender, which was promptly refused, when General French assaulted in full force, rushing his men up to the very parapets, where they were moved down by hundreds, and several charges were made with the same fatal result.

The garrison before its reënforcement by General Corse consisted of only about 750 men, one hundred or more of this number were in a block-house two miles and a half from Allatoona heights to protect the railroad bridge at the crossing of Allatoona Creek, all of whom were captured and rendered no assistance in defence of the rations.

There were fully two hundred non-combatants, employees of the commissary and quartermaster's departments as well as the railroad construction party, which got cut off and could not get up or down the road, so that the force left was practically about 1,500 muskets.

Sherman was pushing up the Twenty-third Corps under Gen. J. D. Cox as fast as possible to the rescue of the garrison, but the heavy rains precluded the possibility of any aid from that column.

The head of this column never passed Marietta, and the principal influence upon French in with-drawing before getting possession of Allatoona was a column of cavalry which Sherman moved to his left towards Pine Mountain with instructions to burn barns, fences, houses, and hay ricks, in order to mark their line of march, but no troops from Sherman's army reached Allatoona on the 5th, the day of the battle.

These fires, or the smoke from them, alarmed French and probably hastened the retirement of his force, but before retiring he gathered all of his wounded that he could, loaded them into the empty wagons he had brought with him to carry off the rations that were stored there, leaving about 800 killed and wounded, more than 400 prisoners and 800 muskets to attest the severity of the battle.

The returns of General French for the first of October, that is about five days preceding the fight, showed that his force embraced nearly 7,000 men. The next return, the first day of November, that is twenty-six days after the affair, shows that he had a

force of about 5,000, so that his loss must have been fully 1,000 or more in this battle.

During the struggle several attempts were made to set on fire the buildings in which were stored the 2,700,000 rations of bread, bacon, sugar, coffee, and grain, and at each attempt the men were shot with the torches in their hands, and the last attempt was made by an officer, and I cut a star from his coat collar the day after the battle as he lay dead with the torch in his hand.

An amusing incident occurred while the battle was raging. General Corse was trying to communicate with General Sherman on Kenesaw Mountain. The soldier who was waving the signal flag stood upon a stump while trying to send a message, and a piece of a shell from the Confederate battery struck the staff of the flag and knocked it out of his hands. He jumped to the ground, ran down the north side of the hill, and was not seen again. He doubtless ran into the Confederate lines and was captured. General Corse had 1,944 men, French many times that number (say 6,000).

Sherman was at Kenesaw during the engagement, pushing General Cox to the rescue, and flags were conveying the messages from peak to peak interchanged by him and Corse, and when he found Corse was at Allatoona, Sherman exclaimed: "He will hold out; I know the man."

And he did hold out, but in doing it 707 (more than a third) of his men had fallen when the enemy retreated.

General Corse was wounded in the face, the ball grazed his cheek and took off the point of his left ear. Colonel Tourtelotte of the Fourth Minnesota, and Col. R. Rowett of the Seventh Illinois, were seriously wounded.

The next day when Corse was having his wound dressed I said to him, "You had a little more of a fight than you expected, General." "Yes, we had a pretty sharp one, and you see they have tried to mark me for a rogue," he said in reply.

A citizen who had been about the garrison for several weeks selling pies and cakes to the soldiers, and who had been missing for several days, was found among the killed or prisoners (I have forgotten which). From this circumstance and the disposition of his forces, it was verily believed that General French had learned from this man the num-

ber of men of the ordinary garrison, the number of pieces of artillery, their positions, and the contour of the ground, but did not know of the re-enforcement of the garrison, it having been effected so quietly.

It is not departing from the truth to say that General French invested Allatoona with more than treble the force that opposed him, in the full assurance that he would capture the garrison, and carry away the rations in the large train of army wagons that were brought empty for that purpose, as the detachment of troops that was with them did not go into action, showing that to be one if not the main object, and he would have done it had not General Corse arrived as he did.

The battle of Allatoona was a sharp, desperate engagement, fought within a circle of half a mile; simply assault and defence, giving no opportunity for display of generalship, but the material was there had there been occasion for its use. The field had been well prepared for the fight by Colonel Tour-telotte during the summer by felling the timber covering the heights and throwing up breastworks.

It did not seem to be much of a battle, and indeed was not when compared with those on larger fields where combinations were made and re-made, where positions were lost and retaken with their terrible consequences; but it was large when you look at the stubborness of the defence against many times their number, at the loss of more than one-third of the brave little garrison, and more than all upon the far reaching influence it had upon the later movements of the army.

Had the timely arrival of General Corse been delayed by an accident for a few hours, French would have overpowered the garrison, taken the position held by our troops, filled the train he brought for the purpose with the rations stored there, and, if he had not held the position, would have destroyed what he did not carry away, torn up the railroad for many miles in addition to what was already done, requiring weeks and months to repair it. With the preparations for the battle of Franklin culminating, the amount of rations that would be required for the army on the "March to the Sea," in addition to its daily requirement, could not have been col-